

Dear Judge Hilton

My name is Leon Parrish known to friends and my community as Rocky.

I know you may typically receive letters from those who attempt to fluff themselves up and tell you they are more than they are. This isn't my plan as I know what I did was wrong.

It was suggested that I ask well known dignitaries I personally know to write on my behalf. I decided against that because I didn't want to appear as if I deserved or sought special treatment or that I were trying to avoid facing consequences.

Although many would have spoken on my behalf, I refused to put the very people which expected so much of me in a position to cause others to question their character or otherwise.

While I know this will not define me or cause those who truly know my character to look down on me, I for a moment in time, became the very person I detest.

Someone so desperate to create positive change and be a good example for others I did something dishonest to justify that desperation.

My desperation could put many I love in a bad situation due to my actions.

I was a hypocrite to my community, my friends, my employees, those I mentor and worse – my family that I constantly preach to about working hard to overcome obstacles put in their path.

I am sorry that I have defrauded Columbia/Fulton Bank causing them to go through this entire process. Their intent was the same as my own - to help a small business get to the next level. However, the part I played in the transaction was dishonest and illegal.

Many are sorry because they get caught. I am truly sorry that I did this at all.

I know this is something I won't ever do again. Risking my freedom is one thing, however I value being able to mentor others, be a positive example to those who look up to me but most importantly I value the time I have left on this earth raising my children.

No fraudulent action is not worth losing my freedom and not being with my family.

I am also sorry that I have wasted the time of the court system, as well as the resources needed to investigate this case. Special Agent Faden and Oleski were very kind and reasonable upon their visits and communication with me.

When they came to my home and questioned me, I respectfully cut off their line of questioning and much to their surprise I admitted I was guilty of defrauding Columbia Bank.

I didn't want to waste any more of their time as I knew I was wrong and knew I had to face whatever consequences are ahead.

They saved me the initial humiliation and embarrassment of not breaking down our door and traumatizing my family.

When they departed my humiliation and embarrassment was coupled with shame while explaining to my wife and children what my actions have caused. I have always preached to my kids about facing consequences which I am fully prepared to do, yet what I regret most is that I may not be present in their lives for any length of time.

I have disappointed them more than I could ever imagine and sharing with them my fate will be harder than anything I will have to do as a father.

My oldest daughter who suffers from [REDACTED] won't be able call me or video chat me when she needs me most and this hurts me to my soul. Not speaking or seeing my wife children will be the worst punishment imaginable.

Sir, while this is a letter to you, I feel the need to apologize to my biggest supporter - my wife who I will worry equally about. She has always been a great mother to all my kids even the six she did not carry herself. She is left to worry about me and be both parents as well as run both our businesses all while keeping her anxiety from exploding and potentially causing her mental health issues.

This is a burden placed on her which I regret deeply.

She will be alone in navigating our youngest daughters' developmental issues as she's expected to be diagnosed with [REDACTED] in an upcoming assessment.

Not being available to calm my daughter when she needs me; leaving my wife to handle this alone is something I can never apologize enough for.

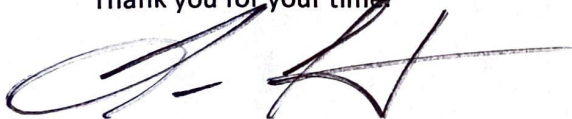
While many look up to me, and others depend on me to provide for their families in whole or part, I am deeply disappointed that my actions have put them all in the worst possible situation. For that I am so sorry.

My intention is to continue repaying my restitution to Columbia/Fulton in full as fast as possible Just as I had been doing when I fraudulently applied and received the loan. I realize if I am incarcerated for any length of time, this will delay that repayment, but I am working towards paying it all back as soon as financially possible.

As I stated earlier, this will not define me as I have continued to be the person I was before and after this terrible decision by positive example for my family and community at every turn.

I accept full responsibility with no excuses, and I blame no one else for my actions. I am willing to face whatever judgement is placed before me.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Leon I. Parrish', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Leon I. Parrish